2 steps of:

3 selecting a

4 database of a first

5 determining

6 of a second entity

7 sending a b

8 providing w

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steps of:

selecting a customer account record from an electronic customer account database of a first entity, said customer account record including a customer identifier; determining if an individual indicated by said customer identifier is a customer of a second entity; [and]

(Twice amended) A computerized customer acquisition method comprising the

sending a billing statement from the first entity to said individual;

providing <u>with the billing statement</u> an [acquisition] offer to said individual to pay <u>at least a portion of</u> an amount <u>due on said billing statement</u> if said individual becomes a customer of said second entity;

receiving acceptance of said offer from said individual; and

12 <u>acquiring the individual as a customer by transferring said at least a portion of</u>

13 said amount to the first entity by the second entity.--

Claim 2, line 2, delete "acquisition".

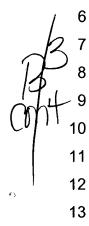
B

- --9. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said billing statement is a billing
- statement of said first entity and said [acquisition] offer is provided to said individual in
- 3 [a] said billing statement of said first entity.--

Claim 10, line 2, delete "acquisition".

54b (21)

- --11. (Amended) A customer agquisition system comprising:
- a memory for storing a customer account record of a first entity, said customer account record including a customer identifier;
- a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor configured to:
- 5 select a customer account record;



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identifier;

determine if an individual indicated by said customer identifier is a customer of a second entity; [and]

generate a billing statement from the first entity for said individual; and provide with the billing statement an [acquisition] offer to said individual to pay at least a portion of an account due on said billing statement if said individual becomes a customer of said second entity;

means for receiving acceptance of said offer from said individual; and
means for acquiring the individual as a customer by transferring said at least a
portion of said amount to the first entity by the second entity.--

By

--12. (Twice amended) A computerized customer acquisition system comprising: means for selecting a customer account record from an electronic customer account database of a first entity, said customer account record including a customer

means for determining if an individual indicated by said customer identifier is a customer of a second entity; [and]

means for sending a billing statement from the first entity to said individual;
means for providing with the billing statement an [acquisition] offer to said

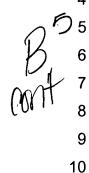
individual to pay <u>at least a portion of</u> an amount <u>due on said billing statement</u> if said individual becomes a customer of said second entity;

means for receiving acceptance of said offer from said individual; and
means for acquiring the individual as a customer by transferring said at least a
portion of said amount to the first entity by the second entity.--

1 --13. (Amended) An article of manufacture comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable code means

embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means comprising:



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a step to select a customer account record of a first entity, said customer account record including a customer identifier;

a step to determine if an individual indicated by said customer identifier is a customer of a second entity; [and]

a step to generate a billing statement from the first entity for said individual; and

a step to provide with the billing statement an [acquisition] offer to said individual to pay at least a portion of an amount due on said billing statement if said individual becomes a customer of said second entity.--

1 --14. (Twice Amended) A computerized customer acquisition method comprising the 2 steps of:

establishing in an electronic database predefined conditions for offering to pay an amount to an individual provided said individual becomes a customer of a first entity; [and]

providing said predefined conditions to a second entity to determine whether said second entity should provide to said individual an facquisition offer to pay at least a portion of an amount due on a billing statement for said individual;

receiving acceptance of said offer from said individual; and

agguiring the customer by transferring the offer amount to the second entity by

the first entity.--

Claim 17, line 2, change "service provider" to --first entity--.

Claim 18, line 1, delete "acquisition".



- (Twice Amended) A customer/acquisition system comprising: **--**19.
- 2 a memory for storing customer account records;
 - a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor configured to:

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5 provided said individual becomes a customer of a first entity; and 6 communicate said predefined conditions to a second entity to determine whether said second entity should provide to said individual an [acquisition] offer to 7 8 pay at least a portion of an amount due on a billing statement for said individual; 9 means for receiving acceptance of said offer from said individual; and 10 means for acquiring the customer by transferring the offer amount to the 11 second entity by the first entity .--1 --20. (Twice Amended) A computerized customer acquisition system comprising: 2 means for establishing in/an electronic database predefined conditions for 3 offering to pay an amount to an individual provided said individual becomes a 4 customer of a first entity; [and] 5 means for communicating said predefined conditions to a second entity to determine whether said second entity should provide to said individual an [acquisition] 6 7 offer to pay at least a portion of an amount due on a billing statement for said 8 individual; 9 means for receiving acceptance of said offer from said individual; and

establish predefined conditions for offering to pay an amount to an individual

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--22. (Twice Amended) A method for paying an amount due indicated on a billing statement generated from an electronic database, comprising the steps of:

means for acquiring the customer by transferring the offer amount to the

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receiving an [acquisition] offer with the billing statement to have at least a portion of said amount due paid by a third party in exchange for becoming a customer of said third party;

7 least a portion of said amount due; and

second entity by the first entity.--

indicating acceptance of said [acquisition] offer for said third party to pay at